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UNCLAS SANTIAGO 001665

SIPDIS

STATE FOR IIP/G/WHA, INR/R/MR, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA
AMEMBASSY FOR PAO, IO

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - TELESUR

On August 5, conservative, influential "El Mercurio" (circ. 116,807) ran a column by pundit Andres Oppenheimer entitled, "Tele-Bush to Stop Tele-Chavez?"

Quote:

"A U.S. TV channel - which would end up being called Tele-Bush - would be counterproductive, at least while there still exist remnants of press freedom in Venezuela. As a frequent CNN political analyst I do not agree with Chavez' stance that CNN reflects the White House's opinions.... However, Telesur should be left to its own fate.... If the U.S. Congress wants to confront Chavez's financial and propaganda squandering in Latin America, it would do better to assist Venezuelan daily "El Universal"...that would be far more effective...and wouldn't give Chavez a new excuse to remain in power forever by arguing that he is defending Venezuela from the claws of 'imperialism'."

KELLY